

Partners in Central Asia

NATO continues to deepen cooperation with its partner countries in Central Asia — Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. It is part of NATO's policy to reach out to strategically important regions whose security and stability are closely linked to wider Euro-Atlantic security. Each of the five countries has the potential to positively impact the future development of Afghanistan, where the Alliance remains deeply engaged.

NATO's new Strategic Concept, adopted at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, states that the promotion of Euro-Atlantic security is best assured through a wide network of partner relationships with countries and organizations around the globe. A focused effort to reform NATO's partnerships policy was launched at Lisbon to make dialogue and cooperation more inclusive, flexible and strategically oriented. The new policy was endorsed by Allied foreign ministers at their meeting in Berlin in April 2011.

NATO's partnership structures and cooperation programmes offer a multilateral framework for security dialogue and opportunities for practical bilateral cooperation in a wide range of areas with NATO member states and other partner countries. This promotes transparency, builds confidence and helps address shared security challenges.

All five Central Asian countries were early participants in the North Atlantic Cooperation Council – a forum for dialogue established by the Alliance in December 1991 as a first step in reaching out beyond the East-West divide to former Warsaw Pact members. This body was later replaced by the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in 1997. Four out of the five countries quickly took advantage of the opportunities offered by the Partnership for Peace, joining this major programme of practical



President of the Kyrgyz Republic Almazbek Atambayev and NATO Secretary General Rasmussen hold a joint press point at NATO Headquarters on 17 September 2013 following a bilateral meeting to discuss regional stability and continued partnership.



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NATO's Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia

At the Istanbul Summit in June 2004, the Allies decided to appoint a Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia. Robert Simmons was the first to be given this responsibility, currently held by former NATO spokesperson James Appathurai. His role is to maintain high-level working contacts with regional leaders in order to promote regional security and assist partners in making the best possible use of partnership tools.



He works closely with regional officials as well as with colleagues in other relevant organizations, such as the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the European Union. This helps to ensure that communication is ongoing and work is done in a complementary fashion. His work in the Caucasus and Central Asia is supported by two Liaison Officers, one in each region.

bilateral cooperation shortly after its launch in 1994 (Tajikistan joined later, in 2002). At the Istanbul Summit of 2004, Allied leaders decided to make partnership with Central Asia, as well as the Caucasus, a priority for the Alliance.

Each Central Asian country's relations with NATO have evolved differently, as individual partners are free to choose how and in which areas they wish to cooperate with NATO. Aside from cooperating with the Alliance, several of the Central Asian partners also participate in other regional security organizations. NATO sees no contradiction between their cooperation with the Alliance and their desire to build strong relations with other organizations.

Shared regional security challenges

With the Great Silk Road passing through the region, promoting the exchange of goods as well as knowledge and ideas between Europe and the Far East, Central Asia has historically been of considerable importance. It continues to be so today.

In the current security environment, the NATO Allies share key security challenges with their partners in Central Asia. The threats posed by terrorism, religious extremism, ethnic conflict, failed states, organized crime, the proliferation of weapons and drug-trafficking defy borders and can only be addressed through concerted international action.

Looking at the wider region, developments in Afghanistan directly or indirectly affect security and stability in Central Asia; the reverse is also true. NATO's involvement in the region deepened when it took command of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan in 2003. That is why NATO is engaging its Central Asian partners in a political dialogue on developments in Afghanistan and the wider region, including on NATO's post-2014 mission to train, advise and assist Afghan security forces.

The diverse ethnic make-up of Afghanistan means that most Central Asian countries also have ties with important local communities and actors, which can have a positive impact on the stabilization and reconstruction of Afghanistan. It is also in the interest of Central Asian countries to see the situation in Afghanistan stabilized – they wish to prevent the risk of instability spreading to their own countries

and are themselves struggling to address the threat posed by the trafficking in Afghan narcotics.

Afghanistan-related security cooperation and the importance of regional cooperation

Central Asian nations have provided support to the NATO-led ISAF operation in Afghanistan. This support has included over-flight rights and the leasing of military bases to individual Allies. Additionally, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan (along with Belarus, Russia and Ukraine) have provided rail and/or road networks through which non-lethal supplies can be transported to and from Afghanistan. This Northern Line of Communication also offers opportunities for Central Asian partners to transform these transport networks into long-term commercial arteries connecting Afghanistan and the Central Asian states among themselves, as well as connecting the region to Europe. The further development of regional railroads will be important in what is still the world's least economically integrated region, bringing a "New Silk Road" vision – of an inter-connected region through transport, communication and energy infrastructure – closer to reality.

Harnessing the opportunities of regional cooperation for the benefit of stability in Afghanistan is another challenge for Central Asia. NATO believes that the Istanbul Process/Heart of Asia – a high-level dialogue focused on encouraging security, political, and economic cooperation among Afghanistan and its neighbors – is a valuable framework in which to pursue such cooperation. NATO is actively engaged in this process and also practically supports the confidence-building measure on disaster management. On a bilateral level, NATO's Central Asian partners have been making important contributions to the stabilisation and development of Afghanistan.

Kazakhstan has provided a generous assistance package for Afghanistan which offers investment, agricultural aid, and the construction of schools, hospitals and railways, as well as a scholarship fund bringing Afghan students to Kazakhstan. Tajikistan is supporting efforts to facilitate the movement of people and goods across the river Panj, which marks the border between Tajikistan and Afghanistan. The Tajik government has also worked with the Aga Khan Development Network and the Afghan government to complete the construction of

NATO's ISAF Mission

Security in Central Asia and in Afghanistan is linked to a considerable degree – developments in Afghanistan directly or indirectly affect security and stability in the wider region. NATO continues to invest in building the capability and confidence of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) to prevent Afghanistan from once again becoming a safe haven for terrorists and terrorism. A well-prepared and capable ANSF will significantly reduce the likelihood of spill-over effects into neighbouring countries and contribute to overall regional security. And the ANSF are doing well – the overall security situation in Afghanistan continues to improve as a result of the continuous and efficient operations they conduct.

ISAF will continue to provide security assistance to the Government of Afghanistan in accordance with relevant UN Security Council Resolutions until the end of 2014. The gradual transition of lead responsibility for security is progressing well and is on track for the ANSF to have achieved full responsibility by the end of 2014. NATO is committed to play its part after 2014 to help the Afghan forces to continue this positive trajectory and help to make it sustainable.



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President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev and the NATO Secretary General speak to the press at NATO Headquarters on 25 October 2010, following bilateral discussions on cooperation, in particular in the area of defence reform and support for the NATO-led operation in Afghanistan.



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President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov meets the NATO Secretary General on 24 January 2011 to discuss support for Afghanistan and how to deepen bilateral partnership and cooperation between his country and NATO.

several bridges, with more to be completed in the future. Turkmenistan has provided subsidised energy to Afghanistan and is participating in work on the TAPI pipeline and on a railway linking Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Tajikistan. Specialists from Uzbekistan have assisted with a number of infrastructure projects in Afghanistan, including the rebuilding of ten bridges connecting the northern part of the country with the capital, constructing Afghanistan's first railroad from Hairaton to Mazar-i-Sharif, and supplying electricity to Kabul.

NATO believes that such efforts would only gain in effectiveness if they were organised through a multilateral framework, and therefore encourages all Central Asian partners to fully participate in the Heart of Asia process.

The geographic proximity of the Central Asian countries to Afghanistan and internal problems with religious extremism have reinforced their interest in working with NATO Allies to better respond to the threat of terrorism. The Central Asian partners contribute to the fight against terrorism through their participation in the Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism, which was launched by the EAPC in the wake of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States. Cooperation in this area includes information exchange and participation in training and exercises to enhance local forces' ability to counter terrorism. Improving preparedness for managing the consequences of a possible terrorist attack is also important. NATO further supports regional efforts under the Joint Plan of Action for the Implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia. It is important to note that while Central Asian states can indeed be expected to continue to face threats related to extremism and terrorism after 2014, they also need to address pressing internal challenges relating to equitable socio-economic development, good governance, democracy and human rights. NATO stands ready to assist its Central Asian partners in building democratic, accountable security institutions, as it has done in many other countries.

Partnership for Peace: a tailored framework for cooperation

The essence of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme, which celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2014, is the partnership formed between each individual partner country and NATO. Cooperation is tailored according to the country's ambitions, needs and abilities, and jointly implemented with the partner government. Partners choose from an extensive menu of activities to draw up two-year programmes of cooperation, known as Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programmes.

Activities on offer touch on virtually every field of NATO activity, including defence reform, defence policy and planning, civil-military relations, education and training, military-to-military cooperation and exercises, civil emergency planning and disaster response, and cooperation in the scientific sphere.

Each Central Asian partner's individual programme of cooperation with NATO has evolved differently, according to its respective needs and interests.

Kazakhstan, a particularly active partner in the region, takes part in the full spectrum of partnership activities and, in 2006, developed an Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) with NATO. This new partnership mechanism was launched by the Allies after the Prague Summit in 2002, aimed at partner countries with the political will and ability to deepen their relationship with NATO. Set in a two-year timeframe, the IPAP brings together the various cooperation mechanisms through which Kazakhstan interacts with the Alliance into an action plan that is focused on supporting the country's reform objectives. Under this arrangement, Kazakhstan's government sets out its reform plans, priorities and related timelines. NATO agrees to provide focused, country-specific advice and individual Allies seek to coordinate their bilateral assistance to better support the country's domestic reform efforts. Kazakhstan has agreed three consecutive IPAPs with NATO and, in early 2014, was in the process of discussing its fourth, thus renewing its partnership commitment with NATO.

Kyrgyzstan showed increased interest in further developing its partnership activities and agreed to participate in the PfP Planning and Review Process in 2007. Following political upheaval in 2010,



President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon meets the NATO Secretary General on 10 April 2013 to discuss bilateral cooperation, counter-narcotics efforts, and regional security.

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NATO's Liaison Officer in Central Asia



The NATO Liaison Officer works directly with Central Asian government authorities to maximise their use of NATO's partnership instruments in support of the goals set out in their respective cooperation programmes with the Alliance. Supported by a small office, the Liaison Officer also acts as NATO's diplomatic focal point on the ground and facilitates NATO's practical engagement with Central Asian partners in a variety of areas, including defence planning and review, support to NATO operations, defence education and training, civil emergency planning, cooperation on science and environmental issues, and public diplomacy. The Liaison Officer further engages and coordinates with other international actors in the region, such as Allied embassies and international organisations, including the missions of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the European Union and the International Committee for the Red Cross. Kazakhstan was the first Central Asian partner to host the NATO Liaison Officer. Since March 2013, the current NATO Liaison Officer has been based in Uzbekistan, where his office is accredited as a diplomatic mission.

the new government and Parliament have reaffirmed the country's relationship with NATO. Kyrgyzstan warmly welcomes NATO's ongoing resettlement and retraining programme for released military personnel, has requested the implementation of a NATO/PfP Trust Fund project to enhance storage facilities for small arms and light weapons and ammunition, and has expressed readiness to host a NATO office in Bishkek.

Tajikistan was the last of the Central Asian countries to join the PfP programme in 2002. It has been expanding partnership activities since then, with a particular interest in disaster preparedness and response (civil emergency planning) and demilitarization projects under the NATO/PfP Trust Fund mechanism. Recent Tajikistan-NATO discussions have also explored closer engagement in areas such as border security and public diplomacy.

Turkmenistan's cooperation with NATO is more limited than that of other Central Asian partners and includes exclusively civilian-oriented activities. However, the country's efforts in recent years to open itself up to greater cooperation and dialogue with neighbours and international organizations also present opportunities for enhanced cooperation with NATO.

Cooperation with **Uzbekistan** developed substantially in the early years of the partnership. However, progress slowed significantly during the controversy over the events in Andijan in May 2005, which led NATO Allies to call for an independent international investigation. In the last several years, political engagement and practical cooperation have begun to grow again. Tashkent agreed to host the NATO Liaison Officer in Central Asia and is boosting its engagement with the Alliance in several areas, including defence education reform and public diplomacy.

Partnership values

Partnership is about more than practical cooperation – it is also about values. When partner countries join the Partnership for Peace, they sign the PfP Framework Document. In doing so, partners commit to respect international law, the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Helsinki Final Act, and international disarmament and arms control agreements; to refrain from the threat or use of force against other states; to respect existing borders; and to settle disputes peacefully.

The Framework Document also enshrines a commitment by the Allies to consult with any partner country that perceives a threat to its territorial integrity, political independence, or security. The purpose of these commitments and of the PfP programme as a whole is to build confidence and transparency, diminish threats to peace, and build stronger security relationships with the Allies and with other partner countries. Other instruments, such as the Individual Partnership Action Plan, offer an important opportunity for political consultations between partner countries and NATO. Heads of state and ministers regularly visit NATO Headquarters to meet the Secretary General and the North Atlantic Council, NATO's principal decision-making body.

Multilateral dimension

In addition to bilateral cooperation, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership framework has an important multilateral dimension. This is embodied in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), which brings together the 28 Allies with 22 partner countries in a forum for dialogue and consultation. Meetings of the EAPC are held monthly at the level of ambassadors, regularly at the level of foreign and defence ministers and chiefs of defence, as well as occasionally at summit level.

EAPC members regularly exchange views on a wide range of security issues, including the evolving security situations in Kosovo and Afghanistan, where peacekeepers from Allied and partner countries are deployed together. The EAPC has also taken initiatives to promote and coordinate practical cooperation and the exchange of expertise in areas such as combating terrorism, border security, counter-narcotics, and other issues related to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and small arms and light weapons.



President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov and former NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer meet on 7 November 2007 for bilateral discussions on cooperation at NATO Headquarters.



General Martin Dempsey (U.S. Chief of Defence) talks with Major General Victor Makhmudov (then Chief of Defense of Uzbekistan) and Lieutenant Colonel Dilmurod Isakulov (Uzbekistan's Military Representative to NATO) during the 168th Chiefs of Defense meeting at NATO Headquarters in January 2013.

NATO's Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan

The new NATO mission in Afghanistan will be called Resolute Support. It will not be ISAF by another name – it will be different and significantly smaller. Its sole focus will be train, advise and assist the Afghan forces. NATO has also committed to help sustain the Afghan National Security Forces financially; and Allies agreed that to deepen the political relationship with Afghanistan through an initiative called “Enduring Partnership”.

Many nations – both Allies and partners – have offered their support for the new mission. NATO remains committed to security in Afghanistan and the broader region and this commitment has been affirmed at the highest levels.

In June 2013, NATO Defence Ministers agreed on the basic outlines of the mission – it will be based on a limited approach based on five locations in Kabul, the north, west, south and east and will focus on national institutions, such as security ministries, and training the corps level of army and police command. The planning for the Resolute Support Mission will continue to progress in 2014.

To facilitate consultation and cooperation, all five Central Asian partners have established diplomatic representation to NATO Headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are represented in the Military Partnership Division at Allied Command Operations – based at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Mons, Belgium – which facilitates the countries' participation in training and exercises. Additionally, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan also have military representatives at NATO Headquarters in Brussels.

Key areas of cooperation

Beyond promoting transparency and building confidence, key priorities of NATO's cooperation with its Central Asian partners are to improve interoperability (the ability of the forces of these countries to work with those of the Allies and other partner countries) in peacekeeping operations and to develop practical cooperation to address shared security challenges. Some countries are also benefiting from tailored advice and support for defence and security sector reforms. Other important areas of cooperation are disaster preparedness and scientific and environmental collaboration. Public diplomacy activities to raise awareness of NATO's role, and of the benefits of cooperation with the Alliance, are also carried out.

Defence and security sector reform

Defence and security sector reform is an increasingly important area of NATO's cooperation with partner countries. It is an area in which NATO and individual Allies have considerable expertise that partners can draw from.

One key focus is to improve the ability of partner country forces to support NATO-led peacekeeping and crisis management operations. Bilateral programmes and multinational exercises help to develop the capacity of partner forces to work alongside NATO forces. Learning to speak a common language and developing interoperability in terms of standard procedures are essential.

Another priority for cooperation with partners in the area of defence and security sector reform is to promote the effective and efficient management of defence institutions, as well as civilian and democratic control of the armed forces.

Whereas in most other partner countries defence reform and military transformation have been concerned with downsizing or adapting existing security structures, the situation in Central Asia is somewhat different.

Many of the countries in the region have had to develop a whole new class of officers, which needed to be recruited and trained. In addition, new structures for defence ministries posed a challenge for reforms to promote parliamentary and civilian control, and transparent planning and resource allocation in the defence area.

A key instrument for helping partners with these specific and technical reforms is the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP). It helps identify, develop and evaluate forces and capabilities which might be made available for NATO-led peace support operations. It also provides a framework for partners to develop effective, affordable and sustainable armed forces, as well as promoting wider defence reform efforts. Under PARP, Partnership Goals are agreed with each participating country and extensive reviews measure progress annually. Several Central Asian partners have chosen to take part in PARP: Kazakhstan began participating in 2002. Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan joined the process in 2002 and 2007, respectively. However, their participation has been on hold for a number of years now. Tajikistan has also expressed initial interest in PARP.

The Kazakhstan government's efforts at achieving greater interoperability with NATO troops have led to the creation of a Kazakhstan battalion (KAZBAT), followed by a Kazakhstan brigade (KAZBRIG), which have benefited from assistance from NATO Allies. Since 2006, Kazakhstan, in cooperation with NATO Allies and regional partners, has hosted annual military exercises named "Steppe Eagle". These exercises have contributed to strengthening the interoperability of KAZBAT with Alliance forces. The 2012 and 2013 exercises were conducted by Kazakhstan "in the spirit of Partnership for Peace". Kazakhstan has also declared the goal of having specific units (e.g., KAZBAT) fully interoperable with NATO. Under NATO's Operational Capability Concept – Pool of Forces, NATO provides standards, training, evaluation, and certification of units. This provides partner countries with highly modern, deployable, and interoperable forces, which can then be utilised in many different types of operations, including UN peacekeeping and peace support operations. They can also be considered for future deployment with NATO in crisis response and humanitarian operations.

Kyrgyzstan - Resettlement and retraining of released military personnel

NATO is assisting Kyrgyzstan in the field of resettlement and retraining of former military personnel by providing courses in English, management, and information technology. A regional expansion of the programme took place in 2012, with courses now offered in Bishkek and in Osh. The new site in Osh also offers training for released border guards. By the end of 2013, the programme has retrained some 450 former officers. In 2014, NATO plans to hold 10 retraining courses for up to 140 former military personnel.



Kazakhstan armed forces soldiers participate in Steppe Eagle 2013 exercise. In December 2013, Kazakhstan announced a decision to send 20 officers as observers to UN peacekeeping missions in Africa and in Haiti.



The Steppe Eagle 2013 exercise takes place in Kazakhstan. The exercise was designed to practice the peacekeeping procedures and capabilities of KAZBAT; it included 1260 military personnel and participants and observers from 12 countries.

Kazakhstan requested a Defence Education Enhancement Programme (DEEP) in 2007; the programme assists Kazakhstan's National Defence University (NDU) with curriculum and pedagogy that are compatible with those in NATO/Western defence education institutions. Currently the DEEP focuses on support for the Ph.D. faculty at the NDU and development of courses for Kazakhstan's Partnership for Peace Training Centre of the Army Institute (KAZCENT).

Kazakhstan contributes to Allied and partner capacity building efforts as a member of the Partnership Training and Education Center (PTEC) Community. KAZCENT was recognised as a PTEC in 2010 and has conducted train-the-trainer instructor exchanges in order to build their curriculum alongside other members of the PTEC network, including the Finnish Defence Forces International Centre and the Swedish Armed Forces International Command Training Centre.

Kazakhstan has also shared its PARP experience in the region and has, for example, organized a regional conference on this subject. In addition, KAZCENT offers annual courses open to Allies and Partners on military English, NATO staff procedures, and a five-day familiarisation course on the history, economy, and culture of Central Asia and Afghanistan.

At the request of the Uzbekistan authorities, in December 2013 NATO began the implementation of a DEEP with Uzbekistan. Over the next three years, NATO-led multinational teams of academics will provide assistance in developing four courses in the fields of NATO familiarisation, NATO staff planning procedures, counter-terrorism, and civil emergency planning. Work has also begun on the establishment of a PfP Training Centre in Uzbekistan.

Another priority for the Alliance is to support partner countries with demilitarization projects through the NATO/PfP Trust Fund mechanism. These are aimed at assisting partners with the safe destruction of stockpiles of surplus or obsolete landmines, munitions, and small arms and light weapons, as well as supporting their efforts to manage the consequences of defence reform. Funded by voluntary contributions from individual Allies and partner countries, these projects typically involve close cooperation with other relevant organizations. In Tajikistan, a NATO/PfP Trust Fund project led by the United Kingdom and involving Japan as a lead contributor

disposes of unserviceable munitions and survey weapons and ammunition storage facilities in the border regions. This follows up the progress made when, in 2004, the country's destruction of its remaining stockpile of 1200 anti-personnel mines helped it meet its obligations under the Ottawa Convention on the prohibition of the use, stockpiling, production, and transfer of anti-personnel mines and their destruction.

In Kyrgyzstan, NATO began implementing a resettlement and retraining programme for released military personnel in 2009. The programme has since grown to cover both the capital, Bishkek, and the country's second city, Osh. Responding to a request by Kyrgyzstan's authorities, preliminary work has also started on a possible new NATO/PfP Trust Fund project, led by Turkey and involving Switzerland, to enhance capacity for the safe storage of small arms and light weapons and ammunition.

Helping Central Asia counter the trade in Afghan narcotics

Afghanistan produces some 90 per cent of the world's output of opium, posing a major challenge for the international community. The drugs trade is linked to organized crime and the financing of terrorism. Drug use also poses tremendous social and health problems which transcend national boundaries.

All five Central Asian partners are participating in the NATO-Russia Council Counter Narcotics Training Project, which was launched in December 2005. The initiative seeks to build local capacity and to promote regional networking and cooperation by sharing the combined expertise of the Allies and Russia with mid-level officers from Afghanistan, the Central Asian countries and Pakistan.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) acts as the Project's executive agent. Russia, Turkey and the US have hosted training courses for officers from Afghanistan, Central Asian countries and Pakistan, while mobile courses are also being conducted in the field. In 2013, the project also began work to encourage cross-border counter narcotics training. This includes supporting the UNODC's work in establishing border liaison officers at existing border checkpoints between Northern Tajikistan and Southern Kyrgyzstan.

The NRC nations participating in the project convene with representatives of Afghanistan, the Central Asian nations, and Pakistan for High Level Steering Sessions, which ensures that the Project continues to meet the countries' counter narcotics training needs. By the end of 2013, over 3,000 officers had been trained under the NRC project. The project's impact is also being seen through the requests for more specialised training for counter narcotics officers now that basic training has been widely achieved.

Disaster-preparedness and response

Natural or man-made disasters can be overwhelming, even for the best-prepared countries. The repercussions of these disasters often cross borders and so can threaten the security and stability of entire regions. This is why cooperation with regard to effective disaster-preparedness and response (known as “civil emergency planning” in NATO) is essential and an integral part of partnership activities. Several of the Central Asian partners are working to improve their national disaster-preparedness and response capabilities in cooperation with NATO. Many activities in this area are undertaken within the framework of the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC).

The EADRCC was created in 1998 to coordinate disaster-relief efforts among the EAPC countries. It has, for example, helped coordinate assistance to southern Kyrgyzstan when the government requested help after severe flooding in 2005, and after heavy snowfall had caused massive destruction in 2006.

Most Central Asian partners participate in activities and exercises organized by the EADRCC, with Kazakhstan seconding a representative to the organization’s Operations Centre at NATO Headquarters. Exercises provide a valuable opportunity to assess capabilities in action and identify areas for greater cooperation in the future. In recent years, most EADRCC activities, including a number of exercises, have been initiated, organized and conducted in partner countries. This reflects the high value that partners place on cooperation in civil emergency planning, which represents the largest non-military component of PfP activities.

Tajikistan - Trust Fund project on safe disposal and storage of munitions in the border regions

In Tajikistan ammunition is held by a number of ministries and for legacy and security reasons much was dispersed to locations throughout the country. The NATO Trust Fund provides for the support and deployment of an Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Team recruited from Tajikistan’s retired military personnel. The EOD Team is improving the physical security and stockpile management of ammunition by providing a disposal service and expert advice on the safety and security of ammunition.

Through liaison with government agencies and local communities, the Trust Fund EOD Team is destroying redundant and unserviceable munitions and, where necessary, relocating serviceable stocks to secure storage locations. At the invitation and agreement of Tajikistan’s authorities, the Trust Fund EOD Team will make visits to remote locations to conduct Security and Safety Surveys during the next phase of the project. The site report will form the basis for recommending further priorities for action. Munitions stockpile security and management training will also be provided to staff within Tajikistan’s government departments.



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Science and the environment

Scientists and researchers from the Central Asian countries have been engaged within the framework of the NATO Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme for more than two decades. The SPS Programme enables close collaboration on issues of common interest to enhance the security of NATO and partner nations. By facilitating international efforts, in particular with a regional focus, the Programme seeks to address emerging security challenges, support NATO-led operations and advance early warning and forecast for the prevention of disasters and crises.

Collaboration is a tradition among scientists and a requirement for scientific progress. The networks created also fulfill a political goal of building understanding and confidence between communities from different cultures and traditions. Another important objective of the SPS Programme is to promote the sharing and transfer of technology to help partner countries address their particular priorities through concrete cooperation activities. This is carried out through multi-year research projects, workshops, and training courses.

Today, experts from Central Asian and Allied countries are working together to address a wide range of security issues, notably in the fields of counter-terrorism, disaster forecast and prevention of natural catastrophes, and environmental security. For example, an advanced training course took place in June 2012 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, which provided military and civilian experts with a common approach and methodology to build national counter-terrorism capacity. In May 2013, a workshop held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan addressed the prevention of potential crises and conflicts through disaster forecasting, modeling, and sustainable development. Finally, a multi-year research project to assess and monitor trans-boundary water pollution – an area of crucial importance to the social and economic well-being of populations in the region – is underway and includes experts from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

Public diplomacy

Cooperation in the area of public diplomacy with the Central Asian partners aims at raising awareness of the Alliance and the benefits of partnership with NATO as well as engaging with key opinion formers and civil society. Cooperation is ongoing with interested partner countries to build networks with universities, non-governmental organizations, and the press and media. Activities,



Participants in NATO Science for Peace and Security workshop on disaster forecasting, crisis modelling, and sustainable development. The workshop was held in May 2013 in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.



Students at Kazakhstan's Al-Farabi University take part in the model-NATO conference in November 2013. The conference was organized by the NATO Information Center and included a video teleconference with the NATO International Staff in Headquarters.

such as seminars, conferences, summer schools and workshops, are organized by local non-governmental organizations or institutions with the support of NATO and in cooperation with state authorities.

In Kazakhstan, a NATO Information and Resource Centre has been operating in Almaty since 2007, improving access to relevant publications and documentation. The Alliance is also in the process of expanding the number of NATO Depository Libraries and NATO Multimedia Corners across the region, with a NATO Depository Library opening its doors in Uzbekistan's University of World Economy and Diplomacy in Tashkent in 2014. Academics, government officials and opinion formers from these countries are regularly invited to visit NATO Headquarters for briefings about the Alliance.

NATO officials also travel to the region to meet relevant state representatives and speak at public events. The NATO Liaison Officer in Central Asia plays an active role in the area of public diplomacy, notably by engaging with civil society actors and the media, and participating in public events.

- 1992 Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan join the North Atlantic Cooperation Council.
- 1994 Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan sign the Partnership for Peace (PfP) Framework Document.
- 2001 Central Asian partners join fellow members of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in condemning the September 11 terrorist attacks and pledging to combat terrorism. Over-flight rights, bases and other assets in Central Asia are made available for the US-led coalition operation in Afghanistan.
- 2002 Tajikistan joins the Partnership for Peace.
- Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan start participating in the PfP Planning and Review Process.
- 2003 Uzbekistan hosts disaster-response exercise Ferghana 2003.
- NATO takes over the lead of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan – all Central Asian partners support the mission.
- 2004 NATO's Istanbul Summit decides to place special focus on Central Asia and the Caucasus; creates position of NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for the two regions, as well as a NATO Liaison Officer for each region.
- Tajikistan signs a transit agreement with NATO in support of operations in Afghanistan.
- With support of a small PfP Trust Fund project, Tajikistan completes destruction of over 1200 landmines.
- 2006 Kazakhstan develops its first Individual Partnership Action Plan.
- NATO Information and Resource Centre is opened at the Al-Farabi Kazakhstan National University in Almaty, and a NATO Depository Library is opened at the National Library in Astana, Kazakhstan
- 2007 President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov visits NATO Headquarters.
- Kyrgyzstan decides to participate in the PfP Planning and Review Process.

2009 NATO Depository Library is opened at the Diplomatic Academy in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

NATO launches a resettlement and retraining programme for released military personnel in Kyrgyzstan.

Kazakhstan hosts the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) Security Forum in Astana as well as disaster-response exercise ZHETYSU 2009.

2010 NATO completes arrangements with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan for the transit of non-lethal ISAF cargo by rail.

A Trust Fund project on the destruction of melange is completed in Uzbekistan.

President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev visits NATO Headquarters.

2011 President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov visits NATO Headquarters.

President of Kyrgyzstan Roza Otunbayeva visits NATO Headquarters.

2012 Foreign Ministers of all five Central Asian Partners, as well as the Defence Minister of Uzbekistan, attend NATO's Chicago Summit.

NATO completes arrangements with Kyrgyzstan for the transit of non-lethal ISAF cargo by rail.

2013 New Trust Fund project is launched in Tajikistan to dispose of unserviceable munitions and survey weapons and ammunition storage facilities in the border regions.

President of Kyrgyzstan Almazbek Atambayev visits NATO Headquarters.

President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon visits NATO Headquarters.

Office of the NATO Liaison Officer in Central Asia opens in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

2014 NATO Depository Library is opened at the University of World Economy and Diplomacy in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

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